

### THE DUOMO AT MILAN.

We left Lodi and its gory honor on our south, crossed the Adra, and were soon knocking at the Posta gate of Milan, one of the most beautiful cities of the world. Our drive to the hotel is under a promenade, which constitutes the circumference of the city, and measures twelve miles! Travelers have rarely described Milan as it really is, in all the splendor of its views, and the greatness of its extent. Standing, as it does, between the gorgeous palaces of nature upon the North, and the temples of art and luxury upon the South, and sweeping, as its tributary, the blossom and fragrance of Italia's garden, Milan should not alone be spoken of for its Duomo and its Arena, its Arch and its "Last Supper," by De Vinci; but for its regal magnificence and commanding prospects. Lofty houses, elegant court-yards, and fine paves, are not wanting to make an unbroken perspective of grandeur in the streets. But hold! miracle of wonder! what is that tall spire, sculptured and entablatured, rising from forth the sea of stone, "how silently," in its delicate and labyrinthine magic of art! Is it the phantasm of a dream, or the grotesque illusion of the clouds? The white statues, as you approach, people the slender pinnacles, and stand within the marble niches. This unparalleled Duomo has been likened to a river of marble shot into the air to a height of 500 feet, and then suddenly petrified while falling! Surely it must have arisen like an exhalation "to the sound of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet;" for it seems of the very air—airy in its frozen poetry.

We did not tarry long without. We entered its dark, high nave, branching like monster trees of some other world; and uplifted by octagon circular columns, so high, that they seem toppling to the upraised eye. The finest stained glass win-

dows, perhaps, in the world, beautify the darksome aisles. The evening light slowly plays through every colored form of saint and prophet, flower and tracery.

While we stand spell-bound, the janitor, who spoke bad English, came up and politely offered to show us the top. After dropping a few sous for the church at the portal, we wound up a spiral inclined plane, and within the magic marble mountain. We are soon within the mazes above. Solid as earth, it seems a fairy city of towers. One hundred and fifty-five pinnacles point upward; nearly 7,000 statues glance in the light, while niches stand waiting for 3,000 more! Fifteen thousand different points are lifted from the roofs—for there are more roofs than one, as we find by ascending staircase on staircase. Below us, on the last roof, is the *Botanic Garden*! What! is Italy so prodigal of its verdure, that the Cathedral's top should bud and blow like the hanging gardens of Old Assyria? It is only the marble which has sought, through genius and taste, manifold forms in the pointed spires. Fifteen thousand buds, flowers and fruits, each different, bloom perennially amid the upper air, and that without irrigation or pruning.

This immense pile has been centuries in completing. Napoleon, whose mind was ever ready to build monuments to art and himself, added an immense addition. Architects have discussed the minutest points of this Duomo in lines of solid quarto. Nearly thirty hundred millions of francs have been expended upon it. An edifice as large as Grace Church, New York, is upon its top as plainly as the Pantheon is upon St. Peter's.

The view from it, is incomparably fine. The eye may float over the scenery of Italy, and revel in its fairest bowers, discern the cities around for forty miles, and to the north see those everlasting Alps, which lock up the gateways of Europe. The beautiful hills of Como and Maggiore, surrounding the magic mirrors in which they are reflected; the Saint Gothard; farther west, the Simplon, through whose defiles we expect to pass; the Monte Rosa, white and radiant, except at sunset, when it illustrates its name in the sweetest of hues; Mount Cenis to the direct west; and further around, the line of the Apennines; and to the southeast, the sweeping vale of the Po, with Cremona and Crema—all can be viewed from this lofty spot! What a resplendent, magnificent, glorious creation is ours! How full of beauty and sublimity! Would that our distant friends could behold these splendid Alpine temples upon the north, from this marble observatory, and the great pleasure grounds which lie around their feet in such luxuriance of vegetable life!

What are those scaffoldings, observable as we descend, erected far up to the topmost rose of the pinnacle? We are informed by the custodian, that ten men are constantly employed upon these scaffolds in cleaning the building, and that it takes them just twelve years to complete the circuit outside.

Can it be that the Great Father of all is pleased with such stately structures, erected for His worship? Does He delight rather in the marbles of Italy, rather than the rude churches of our land? Profitless inquisition; for the temple of His love

is the upright heart and pure; and where that bows—whether under swelling dome or homely altar—whether under the light of stained splendours, or under the white radiance of an open sky, His presence appears more glorious than all else beside in heaven, or in earth!—*A Buckeye Abroad.*